



RFCI

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<http://www.facebook.com/TampaBayChapterRareFruitCouncilIntlInc>

September 2024

TAMPA BAY CHAPTER of the RARE FRUIT COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL, INC.

Meetings are held the second Sunday, 2:00 P.M.
at the HCC Brandon Campus, Room 206/208
10451 Nancy Watkins Dr., Tampa, FL 33619

⌘ Upcoming Programs and Events ⌘

September 8, 2024: Josh Jamison: "All about bananas" This presentation will cover the world's most important fruit – the banana! We will take a broad look at the world of bananas and



how this tropical fruit can be grown successfully in Florida gardens. Topics discussed will include history, basic growing strategies, soil preparation, variety selection, and more. Special attention will be paid to discussion of genetics and cultivar selection, a critical part of Florida banana cultivation. Josh is the primary grower at Cody Cove Farm and Nursery in Babson Park, Florida, a small family farm specializing in unique edible crop genetics. Their goal is to provide nutritious food to

the community and promote sustainable agriculture through offering high quality plants and produce. They have a special focus on collecting elite edible plant varieties from around the world and making them available to home gardeners, small farms and beyond.

1:00pm – 2:00pm — Social hour + **Josh will have seeds, plants, and merchandise for sale 1:00-2:00pm**

2:00pm – 2:30pm — Potluck – Please feel free to bring a covered dish

2:30pm – 3:30pm — Introduction/Speaker

3:30pm – 4:00pm — Raffle/Closing – Please feel free to bring a plant for the raffle

4:00pm – 5:00pm — HCC Campus Food Forest development and maintenance (lower left quadrant of map below (use parking lot #3 for convenient access)

October 12th and 13th (set-up Friday 11th) USF plant sale!! more information at the September meeting. If you are selling plants, start getting them ready now. Sign-up with the link below as a volunteer! <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0849A9A923A7F5C07-50877345-usfplant>

⌘ Welcome New Members ⌘

Jayan Nair Valrico
Sara Kaye Lakeland
Thanh Seybold St. Petersburg
Jeff Hitchcock Pinellas Park
Mariana Kunker Dade City
Jay Patel Lutz

Jenny Thomas Tampa
Jessica Eilekeith Dade City
Zack Carter Valrico
Larry Pasman Tampa
Darren Watts Zephyrhills

President: Dylan Chadwell; Secretary: KC Gonzalez;
Treasurer: Susan McAveety; Newsletter/Membership: Denise Provencher

Food Forestry – Creating and Eden with Perennial Plants With Amanda Pike, PhD

Photos George Campani



At August's meeting Club members enjoyed food forest expert Amanda Pike discuss how to use food forestry principles in one's yard space. She had copies of her book "Transforming Florida Yards" available for purchase. This book describes the plants suitable for north, central, and south Florida gardening zones, and included steps in how to create a flourishing garden.

Amanda has taken her farming experience, and created an amazingly diverse landscape of over 200 species of edible plants, and also has chickens, and 26 bee hives on her 2 acres in Jupiter. Amanda and her family can get 70% of their meals from their food forest!

Take-aways from Amanda's talk:

- *Permaculture works with nature rather than against it, using affordable, sustainable ways to grow.
- *The goal of a food forest is to put food on the table. Other goals are to replace some of our purchased groceries, and to provide food insurance.
- *Unfortunately, most people live in a food desert of sorts, not having direct access to fresh produce. Also unfortunately, most people live in a food swamp, where access to processed, packaged, fast foods is prevalent.
- *There are 3 annual grasses that fill about 60% of the human diet, wheat, corn, and rice. Wheat is most common in the United States. Corn is more common in Latin countries, and rice in Asian countries.
- *Food forests have 7-9 layers: Canopy/Trees, Large Shrubs, Shrubs, Herbaceous, Groundcover/creepers, Underground, Vertical/climbers, Aquatic/Wetland, Mycelial/Fungal layer.
- *A tremendous amount of food can be grown on a tiny city lot, don't let a small yard stop you!
- *Food forests are also lots of fun and educational for children of all ages. Get them involved!

To contact Amanda Pike:
Tel: 305-767-9949
Amandaalders@yahoo.com





August Field Trip

Photos and write-up provided by Trip Coordinator KC Gonzalez



Our August FIELD TRIP was a success! Thank you to the members that came out to visit our first two locations.

First stop, Mrs. Anna showed off how she is growing several fruit trees and medicinal plants in an HOA subdivision. She explained her four rules for a successful food forest and it is demonstrated with the beautiful job she does maintaining the property. Members left her garden inspired and loaded with cuttings from her garden.

Second stop was to Mango Manor, where members enjoyed strolling through a botanical paradise with mango trees everywhere! Tony and Davey showed members tricks to getting their mangos to fruit successfully, maintain a high-density garden and how to topwork and multi-graft mango trees. They were even generous enough to provide members with a mini-mango tasting and home-made Mango Manor Cake!

Read the great reviews on the Members FaceBook page. Many thanks for all the hard work KC put in to making this trip happen. We look forward to the next one!





Member Spotlight – KC Gonzalez

KC is the Club's secretary, and she is also an avid food forest gardener. Her Tampa city lot garden shows what amazing accomplishments can be had in a small space.

My personal food forest garden, nestled in a suburban Tampa neighborhood (10A), began 10 years ago as a tropical ornamental garden. Over the last three years, it has evolved into a lush, high-density food forest. Spanning 0.17 acres, it features around 100 fruit trees, an array of fruiting shrubs, vines, and bushes, medicinal plants, and raised beds for annuals. While maintaining some of the original rare tropical ornamentals, the garden now thrives as a vibrant ecosystem focused on sustainable, home-grown food. For more insights, garden tours, fruit videos, and instructional content, check out my YouTube channel (@GonzaGardens). You can also explore our edible plant nursery, Food Forest Finds, and view the full inventory at **FoodForestFinds.com**.



View an informative tour of KC's gardens at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bnagM-euCwU>

☞ What's Happening ☞

by Paul Zmoda

Tropical storm Debbie dumped a little over ten inches of rain here. Not only was that welcome to end the drought, but it didn't harm much. The bananas are loving the heat, rain, and humidity.

I made a bunch of air layers on the Guthrie plums. A sprout is showing from a planted seed of the mammee apple we tasted at our mango festival in June.

The different sugar apple fruits are growing, as are the other Annonas. A small percentage turn black and fall off. I think it's a fungus causing that. There are four cherimoyas still hanging, only two Ilamas and just one African custard apple – the others just disappeared. The pindo palm is back to making a heavy rack of delicious fruit every month.

Tomato, pepper and passionfruit seeds have been planted and are sprouting.

Dragonfruit mixed with pineapple makes a good dessert.



African Custard Apple - Photo: Paul Zmoda



From the seed chairman – Get your seeds for fall, winter, and spring gardening at the September meeting. There will be seeds for roots, shoots, and fruits.

∞ Club Notes ∞

Members with plants for sale/trade, or members looking for plants can post here. What do you have to sell/trade or what are you looking for?

We value your feedback! Feel free to submit your thoughts and ideas on how the Club is doing, how it can be improved, what things you would like to see happen, and of course let us know where the Club is doing well. Use the QR code, or Follow the link: <https://forms.gle/mm8AhGsDaBCTfehG7>



Got ideas for field trips? Gardens, food forests, production, farms, etc. to visit?

Let us know here, and we will look into it.

Also let us know whether you would like day trips, or overnight trips, or longer.

Use this QR code, or contact KC at email: kcgonzalez24@gmail.com

If you have any photos, videos, or other material you would like to have posted on the Club's social media site, please contact Kiki at kikiinthegarden@gmail.com Please include the name of the person to be credited, and a bit of information on the item being sent.

Always appreciated: Member contributions to the newsletter! What a great way to share what you are doing in your garden with other members, learn what other members are growing, and get your questions answered. Your submissions for the newsletter, pictures, notes of interest, events, tips, recipes, questions, etc. are especially needed - please send them to Tampa.Bay.RFCI@gmail.com Submissions for the next newsletter due by: **September 22nd**.

∞ Membership information ∞

NEW MEMBERS

Download and fill out a membership application from: <https://rarefruit.org/membership/>, and send with check or money order for \$20 made out to Tampa Bay RFCI to:
Tampa Bay RFCI, 12722 Prosser Rd., Dade City, FL 33525

RENEWING MEMBERS

Send check or money order for \$20 made out to Tampa Bay RFCI and mail to:
Tampa Bay RFCI, 12722 Prosser Rd., Dade City, FL 33525

Both new and renewing members can also make a secure payment using Square. See the October posting link on our Facebook page, or the link on our Website.



The objectives of The Tampa Bay Rare Fruit Council International:

To inform the public about the merits and uses of fruits common to this region and encourages the cultivation, collection, propagation and growth of fruits that are exotic or unusual to west central Florida. The club also encourages the development of new fruit varieties, cooperating with local and foreign agricultural agencies.

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